



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information, Contact:
Diana Read
Injury/Violence Prevention Program
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.4536
E-mail: dread@nd.gov

North Dakota Observes Poison Prevention Week
State Health Department Urges North Dakotans To Protect Children
From Unintentional Poisoning

BISMARCK, N.D. – In observance of National Poison Prevention Week March 14 through 20, 2010, the North Dakota Department of Health is encouraging North Dakotans to take measures to avoid unintentional poisonings of children, according to Diana Read, Injury/Violence Prevention Program director for the Department of Health.

In 2009, a total of 3,221 calls were made to the Poison Helpline concerning North Dakota children younger than 6.

According to Read, children are naturally curious and want to explore their environment. They need to touch, feel and taste to increase their knowledge of the world. However, many household items should not be accessible to children. Instead, things that may be toxic to children should be placed out of reach or in a locked cabinet.

“By using common sense, parents and other caregivers can prevent most poisonings,” Read said. “It’s very important to protect children from substances that can harm them. All adults should take preventive measures to avoid the unnecessary and potentially dangerous exposure of children to poisons.”

The Department of Health recommends the following poison-prevention measures:

- Keep all medicines, household chemicals and other poisonous substances away from children and away from food. Never leave them on the bedside stand, kitchen table or bathroom counter. Lock them up if possible. Ask your visitors to do the same.
- Warn children never to put medicines, chemicals, plants or berries in their mouths unless an adult says it’s OK. At an early age, teach children that some pretty things, like vitamins and aspirin, can hurt them. Never call medicine “candy” to get a child to take it.

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: health@nd.gov

Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

- Never store poison in food or beverage containers.
- Read all labels. Follow the instructions and measure carefully. Open and take medicines only when the lights are on.
- Put all unused medications in a sturdy, securely sealed container and then in the trash can where children and pets can't reach them. You can also dispose of them through the North Dakota Attorney General's Take Back Program. To find out more about the program, visit www.ag.nd.gov/PrescriptionDrugAbuse.htm.
- Do not carry medicine in your purse or diaper bags because children like to play with them.
- Do not put decorative lamps and candles that contain lamp oil where children can reach them because lamp oil is very toxic.
- Keep windows and/or doors open or run fans when using strong cleaning products. Never mix cleaning products together.
- Have the national poison control phone number with other emergency contacts. Telephone stickers and magnets with the phone number are available from the North Dakota Department of Health

In case of a poisoning or a questionable episode, people should do the following:

- Do not give the person anything to eat or drink. Call the Poison Control Center at 800.222.1222 immediately.
- Bring the product or bottle to the phone so you can read the label to the staff at the Poison Control Center. Explain what was taken, how much was taken, when it was taken, and the age and weight of the person.
- Do not give syrup of ipecac or activated charcoal unless told to do so by the Poison Control Center or your physician.

For more information about poison prevention or to request stickers and magnets with the national poison control number, contact Diana Read, North Dakota Department of Health, at 800.472.2286 (press 1) or visit www.ndpoison.org.

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